



Perkins Career and Technical Education Primer

Linked Learning and College and Career Pathways

On July 31, 2018, President Trump signed the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act (Perkins V) into law. The law reauthorizes and updates the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 to ensure career and technical education (CTE) programs meet the demands of the twenty-first-century economy.

Perkins V includes several provisions that support the implementation of [Linked Learning](#) and other high-quality college and career pathways initiatives. Linked Learning is an approach to high school redesign that combines (1) rigorous academics, (2) high-quality CTE, (3) work-based learning, and (4) integrated student supports. Increasingly, Linked Learning also provides students with opportunities to earn postsecondary credit while they still are in high school. These components are woven together in industry-themed pathways that provide for a relevant, hands-on learning experience for high school students.

Integrated Academics and Career and Technical Education

Under Perkins V states explicitly are permitted to deliver joint professional development to core academic and CTE teachers. The new law also allows states and school districts to use Perkins V funds to ensure faculty, paraprofessionals, and others providing instruction in CTE remain current with industry standards by earning the necessary industry-recognized credentials and licenses. All these efforts support and reinforce the sustainability of high-quality college and career pathways.

Employer Engagement and Work-Based Learning

Perkins V strengthens the role of employers and prioritizes work-based learning. The law focuses implementation around the needs of regional, state, and local employers by including them in the development of the state plan and the local application, formerly known as the local plan, developed by school districts. States also must include an employer as a member of the eligible entity responsible for implementing activities under a new competitive innovation fund under the law geared to serve predominately students from low-income families.

For the first time, Perkins V defines “qualified intermediary” and “work-based learning.” The law also designates the percentage of students who graduate from high school having participated in work-based learning as an optional indicator of program quality states can include in their Perkins V accountability system. In addition, states and districts can use Perkins V funds to support work-based learning by incorporating paid internships, mentoring, job shadowing, simulated-work environments, and other opportunities into programs of study.

Early College and Dual or Concurrent Enrollment

Perkins V offers opportunities for students to earn postsecondary credit while in high school through [dual- or concurrent-enrollment courses](#), [early college high school programs](#), and the use of articulation agreements aligned to programs of study. The law includes dual or concurrent enrollment, early college high school programs, and articulation agreements in its definition of CTE. It also allows states and



districts to use state and local funds to support dual enrollment and ensure that information about dual-enrollment programs is available to special populations, such as students from low-income families, English learners, and homeless individuals. States can use state leadership funds available under Perkins V to establish statewide articulation agreements aligned to approved programs of study. Finally, states can use the percentage of students who graduate from high school with postsecondary credit as an optional indicator for program quality within their accountability system.

State Leadership Funds

States may use up to 10 percent of their Perkins V funds to support state leadership activities. These activities may include establishing partnerships among school districts, institutions of higher education, employers, and others that provide students with opportunities to

- complete course work that integrates CTE and rigorous academics;
- earn a postsecondary credential or credit toward a credential at no cost to the student or the student's family; or
- participate in work-based learning as part of available programs of study.



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The **Alliance for Excellent Education** (All4Ed) is a Washington, DC–based national policy, practice, and advocacy organization dedicated to ensuring that all students, particularly those underperforming and those historically underserved, graduate from high school ready for success in college, work, and citizenship. all4ed.org

The **Linked Learning Alliance** is a statewide coalition of education, industry, and community organizations dedicated to improving California's high schools and preparing all students for success in college, career, and life. linkedlearning.org

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